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Memorial Day

THERE can be no doubt that the World War has vastly deepened the significance of our annual observance of the day consecrated to the memory of those who laid down their lives that the nation might live. For one thing, the simultaneous celebration of the day on either side of the ocean, in France as in America and wherever the warriors of the republic have found their last resting places, brings to us a broadened comprehension of the meaning of American nationality. It is something more than the boastfulness of any petty mental provincialism.

"America is another name for Destiny," said Burke in a prophetic outburst more than a century ago. Today, we realize vividly that the American name must be identified with the cause of human freedom, the cause of justice, everywhere. Throwing ourselves into the war to preserve Europe and the world from the menace of Prussian militarism, we showed a generous readiness to spend ourselves to the uttermost for the grandest cause that can inspire the human soul, counting no cost too great in strenuous effort and sacrifice of blood and treasure. It was thus that we learned to know ourselves a nation with a mission glorious beyond that of any other historic people.

The bell that in '76 rang out the glad tidings of the birth of the American Republic in Philadelphia bore the legend: "Proclaim Liberty throughout the land and to *all* the inhabitants thereof!" Wherever the Stars and Stripes are borne aloft in peace or in war that proclamation is made anew. In the propagation of the idea of democracy, in making all our republican institutions the shield and buttress of "the institution of the dear love of comrades," the guaranties of justice and equity for all, we shall most surely build strong and great our own nation.

In the light of the World War whose heroisms we especially honor and exalt on Memorial Day, we are able to realize that its larger meanings have impelled us consciously or unconsciously throughout every crisis in our history. The Declaration of Independence but articulated the deeper prophetic meanings of the Revolutionary War. It was a declaration of the rights of all men to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." It was a perpetual challenge to tyranny, oppression and unjust denial of freedom and equality to men in any and every land. It made inevitable the self-correction of the Civil War that wiped the stain of chattel slavery from our flag and preserved in more than pristine strength the union of states on which so much depended. In turn, as Lincoln so luminously recognized, that internecine struggle became one with more than political or territorial purpose. The men who died at Gettysburg died not merely that *their* nation, in any exclusive sense, should live; but that "government of the people, by the people, for the people should not perish from the earth." And just that idea was the great underlying motive—consciously or unconsciously and despite the sordid scheming of politicians and profiteers—of America's participation in the World War.

As we lay flowers on the graves of the soldiers and sailors who died for humanity in dying for America, may we realize that we shall most truly honor their memory in honoring Courage, Devotion, Patience and Self-Sacrifice given to the upholding of American ideals.

Why the Price of Coal Goes Up

To THE EDITOR—I am a subscriber to your magazine, and I believe that it is published in the interests of all the people. Will you please advise me why the prices of coal for the year 1921 are as high or higher than they were for the year 1920? It does not seem fair that coal prices should stay up, when other products, especially farm products, are just about given away.
—F. J. Kolar.

MR. KOLAR, who is cashier of the Farmers and Merchants State Bank of Silver Lake, Minnesota, asks a very pertinent question and one which thousands of people in this country are asking today. Local coal merchants have sent out to their customers a "friendly warning" to lay in their next winter's fuel supply now, if they would avoid having to pay the higher prices likely to go into effect before snow flies. It is a matter of common experience that householders are now asked to buy anthracite at $18 to $19 a ton and bituminous coal at $14 to $15. Although these are about three times pre-war prices and an advance of some 10 per cent over last year's prices, we are now warned that we will have to pay still more for our next supplies before the summer is over.

In a recent signed statement, the press representative of the Wholesale Coal Trade Association of New York endeavors at once to deny that coal prices have been advanced and to explain why they have been advanced. We are told that many "independent" anthracite mines are shut down because under the present selling price they cannot operate at a profit. We are further told that "bituminous coal, against which there is a buyers' strike, is, and for the last three months, has been offered freely to industrial buyers at approximately what the United States Government says is the cost of production," and that "much soft coal has been sold at less than the cost of production." Anthracite, it is asserted, is now about 25 per cent lower than it was last winter. One reason advanced by this trade representative for public buying now is that Pennsylvania will, on July 1, begin collecting 1½ per cent tax on all anthracite coal mined within that state.

All of which is a rather involved and elaborate attempt to put up a smoke screen between the public and the cold, hard facts in regard to the coal industry. As was clearly shown in THE DEARBORN INDEPENDENT last August, the alleged coal scarcity on which high prices are based is in large part a manufactured one. Our coal mines have a capacity of 700,000,000 tons a year: that is, they can turn out 13,461,000 tons weekly, as against an estimated consumption of 12,000,000 tons. At that time, in order to meet the objection that scarcity and high prices were due, not to any lack in the ability of producers to meet the demand, but to the inability of the railroads to move the coal from the mine to the consumer, the Interstate Commerce Commission instructed the railroads to distribute open-top cars to coal mines only for a whole month. The mines were then producing only 55 per cent of their maximum capacity. A slight improvement followed in the supply of coal cars, but not enough to count. It is plain, indeed, that the railroads have given anything but whole-hearted obedience to the commission's ruling.

The freight-car famine of a year ago no longer exists; but it is evident that the supply of flat cars is inadequate to the demand for the transportation of building materials to which preference is given over coal. That means the public's one hope of relief from extortion is an exercise once more of its emergency powers by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Even a year ago, while the people of the United States were suffering desperately from coal shortage, the mines were exporting 2,000,000 tons a month to Europe. Foreign demand this year, owing to the British miners' strike, has become so exigent that the coal operator can get almost any price he may ask for his product.

Coal operators are not lacking in pretext for their continued exactions of war prices from the consumer. Emphasis is laid again on the increased labor cost of coal production as a justification. This makes it necessary to repeat the reminder that the coal operators are far from limiting their increase in price to the increase in labor cost. It sums up in the typical instance quoted from the testimony before the President's coal commission in 1919:

> "The average amount received by labor for each ton of coal increased by 64 per cent, while the average amount received by the operators as profit on each ton increased by 250 per cent. By the time the much-talked-of increase in wages had reached the public, the average increase in the wholesale price of coal was more than four times the amount awarded to labor."

The Pennsylvania tax of 1½ per cent will probably be similarly "loaded." Surely the present state of things in England should convey its grave warning to America. The blindly selfish and stupid policy now being pursued by the coal operators here in restricting production is well calculated to plunge this country into the same sort of economic chaos and widespread suffering as England is experiencing. Must we pass through a similar experience before we learn that the welfare of workers, operators and consumers, in the long run, depends on establishing the cordial co-operation of all to give the nation the benefit of the largest possible output of coal at the lowest legitimate cost to the community?

The Great Napoleon

OUR age is one of iconoclasm and it would be strange if the name of Napoleon did not come in for its share of thoughtless derision. Beginning on May 5, Paris has been giving itself up to a five weeks' celebration of the centenary of Napoleon's death. His fame is sounded by Archbishop Dubois and the Abbé Hennoqué at Notre Dame. At the Arc de Triomphe, Marshal Foch and his poilus render homage to the idol of every French soldier. President Millerand, at the Sorbonne, pronounces the official eulogy and Maitre Robert, a distinguished jurist, discusses Napoleon as a lawmaker, while General Mangin, at the Invalides, expatiates on Napoleon's qualities as a soldier, and military writers comment on the battles of Napoleon in the light of later history.

Strangely enough, a newspaper campaign against the celebration was waged fiercely, especially in journals representing the Radicals and Socialists more or less associated with Lenin's Third Internationale. Edouard Herriot, mayor of Lyons and Socialist deputy, went so far as to refuse to serve on the committee in charge of the exercises on the ground that the manifestation was a political one. The Jews have no love for Napoleon. He compelled them to stand up and be counted. He kept them within single—not bi-national, rights.

All of which is sharp reminder of the truth that is bound to impress all who pass any time in the fair land of France: the truth that the life of the nation today, more than ever, reflects at every turn the undying influence of this greatest of Frenchmen who was born under the Italian flag. Napoleon is at this day the subject of more books and more lectures than any man in France before or since his time. He is more widely and variously celebrated in sculpture and paintings and monumental architecture. Among all classes, including the Royalists and the Radicals, the Napoleonic tradition and the Napoleonic legend is treasured and exerts a subtle but profound influence on life and thought.

Napoleon's fame grows greater with the passing of the years. If ever it could be truly said that "a great institution is but the lengthened shadow of a great individual," it can be said of France and Napoleon. At the close of a world war in which victory was won through close adherence to Napoleonic tactics and strategy, on the candid avowal of the Generalissimo in supreme command of the Allied and Associated Forces—of an army of some ten million men in the field—it is not strange that stress should be laid on Napoleon's military genius. That tremendous quality has well stood the test of time, despite almost cataclysmic changes in all the conditions of warfare, evolved in the century since his death.

Even the extreme pacifist, deeply disdainful of the claims of military genius to the admiration of mankind, and prone to dub every great general a "great butcher," a ruthless destroyer wading through slaughter to a throne, is beginning to realize that, entirely aside from his fame as a warrior, Napoleon must ever rank high among constructive statesmen. He found France impoverished, rent and torn within by revolutionary enemies of his country and of civilization and menaced, if not actually assailed, from without by the combined powers of Europe. He left his country solidly unified, great, strong, rich and prosperous, advancing rapidly in industry and all the arts, as in modern learning. His title to lasting fame might rest safely on the one achievement of the Code Napoléon, if that were his sole claim to greatness. The foremost of the world's militarists, as we now regard him, his boldness of initiative stayed the fierce swelling tide of European militaristic imperialism that threatened not only to devour France out of hand but to sweep over all the rest of Europe and even to sink its vulture claws in America. He made the pomp of emperors and kings and the boasted might of their seasoned armies ridiculous. For a generation, his name was hated in England as that of a black bogey. "Boney will catch you," was a threat used to bring naughty children to docility. But today, as Lord Rosebery's luminous biography of Napoleon shows us, it would be difficult to measure how much Britain owes to the influence of Napoleon for the democratic spirit that is her true greatness.

In his fall, as in his rise, Napoleon furnishes a striking example of the operation of the eternal verities in life. This does not lessen the value of that example. He fell because of his adoption of the very arrogance of those born in the purple with whom he had warred; because of his surrender to the temptations of luxury and the foolishness of imperial display. Nevertheless and all in all, he embodied France in a larger sense than Louis XIV boasted himself to be the State; and, what is more, he incarnated in commanding degree that sublime Power of the Human Will which on every plane conquers obstacles and ever transforms difficulties into opportunities and dreams into actualities.